

18
Dec. 31.

YEAR'S CATCH OF THE FLEET!

Gloucester's Fish Receipts Show a Falling Off.

62,371 Tons Were Landed by
Our Vessels.

Interesting Comparative Table of the Past Three Years.

Today brings to an end a year, which in the history of the Gloucester fisheries, has been below the average.

The past four years have been what could really be called from good to excellent, but neither of these titles can with right be applied to the fish business of Gloucester for 1903. Many have been the disappointing features, such as decreased catches, forced values, many losses of life and wreck of some of the finest vessels of the fleet, these, coupled with the freezing in of seven of the big frozen herring vessels at Bay of Islands, N. F., last January, are things which make the fishing year of 1903 anything but pleasant to look back upon and contemplate.

Not but what there have been some bright spots, but they have been almost obliterated by other darker and overshadowing features.

But 1903 has not been a year of great calamity. True the big falling off in the catch has had its depressing effect for the time being but the new year will find all, from the hardy fellow who hauls his cod line on Georges to the biggest vessel owner or shipper, stout of heart and facing the future with that courage and confidence which is borne of long years of apprenticeship and master workmanship in this, the most hazardous of all industries, both to life and property.

The year has not been a failure and Gloucester has not gone backward because of it. Strong and sturdy arms have been before the mast, clear, cool heads have stood at the wheel and although the good craft has been beset constantly by gales and headwinds she has weathered it all and made no drift to leeward.

It has been hard sailing, close hauled and by the wind and although no gain has been made, the craft is in good trim to continue the battle or take advantage of a good breeze of prosperity over the quarter or a lively gale of good fortune from dead aft, which all hope will soon come as a reward of merit for perseverance.

In accordance with its usual custom, the Times today prints a complete comparative table of the fish receipts at this port for the years 1901, 1902 and 1903, showing the amount of each kind of fish landed, also an estimate of the fish landed by Gloucester vessels at other ports. The table has been carefully prepared and the figures compiled from the receipts as published daily in the Times, and are as accurate as can be obtained.

The amount of fish of all kinds landed at this port for the year 1903 was 87,843,029 pounds, or 43,922 tons, against 102,183,156 pounds, or 51,092 tons in 1902. It is figured from statistics at hand and estimates that the amount landed by Gloucester vessels direct at other ports is 36,900,000 pounds against 40,000,000 pounds in 1902.

The grand total of fish landed at Gloucester and by Gloucester vessels at other ports during 1903 was 124,743,029 pounds, or 62,371 tons against 142,183,156 pounds or 71,091 tons in 1902.

Salt codfish shows a falling off of over 3,000,000 pounds from last year. This is principally due to the fact that the salt bunk codfishermen were badly bothered for bait and even after this was secured finding fish scarce on their second trip.

Fresh codfish receipts are over 5,500,000 pounds less than last year, the almost total failure of the shakers on the Sable Island, Scatteri and Quero grounds being the principal cause of this big deficit. The fact that prices of fresh fish at Boston have ruled high all the year, thus sending few fares here to split is a factor in this case.

The decrease of almost 1,000,000 pounds in the catch of fresh halibut is to be regretted, as it seems to denote the gradual decrease of what was once one of the most lucrative branches of our fisheries. The partial failure of the fishing on Beaulieu bank and long spells of bad weather account for this falling off.

Hake, haddock and cusk, show the usual slight fluctuations which are expected year after in these branches of our fishery. Despite the fact that pollock were not as plentiful as last year, the catch has exceeded that of last year a little from the fact that the fleet engaged was twice as large as that of last year.

The slight decrease in the catch of flitch halibut is due to the fact that the fleet engaged was smaller than last year, the fares caught averaging about the same as last year.

Although the New England salt mackerel catch was but little larger than in 1902, still there was a gratifying increase in the number of barrels landed at this port. Fresh mackerel receipts were about the same as last year.

Fresh herring shows a gratifying increase, caused by better catches at Ipswich and Essex and the fact that the big power dories now engaged in the business can bring bigger loads and secure them quicker than in previous years.

The falling off in the receipts of salt herring is not from any scarcity of the fish at Newfoundland but because the fleet this winter was about half as large as that of 1902.

The large decrease in the frozen herring receipts is directly attributable to the failure of the fishery at Fortune and Placentia Bays last winter and the freezing in of seven of the fleet at Bay of Islands, N. F.

One of the poorest showings of the year is made by the little shore boats which daily or three or four times a week land their fish here and at Rockport and Lunenburg. These boats have been greatly hampered for want of good bait and this, together with bad weather this winter and the failure of the mackerel netting this side of Cape Cod is responsible for their catch falling off fully one half from last year.

The following table gives the amount of the catch of each different kind of fish landed by Gloucester vessels for the past years, also for 1901 and 1902.

	1903.		1902.		1901.	
	Barrels.	Pounds	Barrels	Pounds	Barrels	Pounds
Salt Cod		28,371,000		31,498,900		33,133,700
Fresh Cod		9,410,000		14,919,400		19,293,300
Halibut		3,205,000		4,080,200		4,305,500
Haddock		3,387,000		4,801,500		4,646,300
Hake		5,614,900		5,512,100		4,198,000
Cusk		1,593,000		987,000		1,339,000
Pollock		5,017,700		4,819,000		2,165,000
Flitch Halibut		625,000		873,800		341,000
Fresh Mackerel	3174	634,800	3,172	634,400	5,432	1,086,400
Salt Mackerel	40,161	8,032,200	34,363	6,872,600	62,593	12,518,600
Fresh Herring	10,076	2,015,200	4,359	993,852	7,789	1,537,700
Salt Herring	46,918	10,697,304	59,696	13,610,688	53,317	12,156,216
Frozen Herring	19,940	3,988,000	23,972	5,465,616	17,376	3,961,728
Swordfish		22,325		12,200		177,000
Cured Fish		2,553,600		2,741,700		1,452,640
Frozen Squid		100,000				32,642
Fresh Squid			481	96,200		
Porgies			680	136,000	550	110,000
Halibut Fins	240	48,000	340	68,000		
Fresh Fish from Boats		1,750,000		3,500,000		3,350,000
Miscellaneous		778,000		500,000		500,000
Total Landed at Gloucester		87,843,029		102,183,156		106,374,886
Landed by Gloucester Vessels at Other Ports direct (estimated)		*36,900,000		*40,000,000		40,000,000
Total landed at Gloucester and by Gloucester Vessels at Other Ports		124,743,029		142,183,156		146,374,886

*Includes fresh mackerel at New York, Newport and New Bedford and other ports and ground fish and mackerel at Boston and other ports.

The Newfoundland Sealing Fleet.

The Newfoundland sealing fleet will be as large as ever, despite the withdrawal of two of our best ships, the Neptune which has gone to Hudson Bay with the Canadian expedition and the Terra Nova, which is now in Australian waters, bound to the rescue of the Antarctic steamer Discovery, Bowring Bros., who owned the latter purchased recently, to replace her, the steamer Sophie, formerly a Norwegian whaler and later purchased by the Germans to send to the relief of their South Polar ship Gauss, but rendered unnecessary by her return. Today Messrs. Bowring announced the buying of another, the Viking, a Norwegian whaler also. These two ships they are rechristening the Eagle and Falcon, after two ships of these names they had in the 90's, the former being lost while whaling in the Arctic and the latter disappearing while homeward bound from Philadelphia after landing a Peary expedition. Bama. Johnson's firm has bought from the Admiralty an older "Discovery" of Arctic fame, a contemporary of the Alert, and have renamed her the "Bloodhound," after a noted sealer of last generation. The Messrs. Job, who own the Neptune, hope to have a ship also to replace her, and if Capt. Farquhar buys one to replace the "Newfoundland," which he recently sold to a local company, the fleet which will sail to the ice fields in March next will be the largest for a decade, and it is to be hoped will do as well as any of its predecessors, a likely enough outcome, seeing the increased value of the products in recent years.

FIERCE BLIZZARD.

Is Raging on the West Coast of Newfoundland.

An American Vessel Is Reported Driven Ashore.

A St. John's, N. F., despatch of, last evening states that a fierce blizzard is raging on the west coast of Newfoundland and is holding trains and shipping helpless. One American fishing vessel partly laden with herring has been driven ashore and badly damaged, and four local craft are also disabled. It is feared that other disasters will be reported off the coast.

AFTER LONG PASSAGE.

Sch. Georgie Campbell Arrives Home This Morning.

Is Very Deep and Has Big Salt Herring Cargo.

With only a plank and a half clear in the waist, sch. Georgie Campbell, Capt. John Marshall, arrived here from Bay of Islands, N. F., with a big cargo of salt herring. The vessel has made a long passage home, being 27 days on the journey, which has been unprecedented for the number of heavy storms and the amount of head winds encountered.

The vessel was very deeply laden, her deck being awash on leaving Bay of Islands, N. F., and Capt. Marshall had to favor her. Being a careful man he took no chances, owing to the deepness of the vessel and was obliged to harbor at Louisburg, C. B., where she lay while a heavy gale blew itself out. The vessel also harbored at Halifax during a heavy gale Christmas. The passage was constantly retarded by almost continuous wind.